



## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

### **Response to H.E. H. Qaderi, the Minister of Counter-Narcotics of Afghanistan**

As delivered by Ambassador Julie Finley  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
March 15, 2006

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States values deeply its friendship with Afghanistan and welcomes warmly Minister Qaderi to the OSCE Permanent Council. We appreciate the level of interest and commitment that Afghanistan, as a Partner for Cooperation, has demonstrated in the OSCE.

On the basis of a request made by Afghanistan to observe its October 2004 Presidential elections, the OSCE launched its first ever out-of-area elections support mission. The United States strongly supported the OSCE in its two assistance missions to Afghanistan. We encourage Afghanistan to pursue follow-up work with the OSCE on the basis of the recommendations made in the OSCE's reports.

We are impressed most favorably by the Government of Afghanistan's expressed commitment to tackle the scourge of the narcotics trade.

The United States is working closely with the Government of Afghanistan and our British partners to support Afghanistan's National Drug Control Strategy, through a five point program to include: public information, alternative livelihoods, elimination/eradication, interdiction and law enforcement and justice reform.

If there is no success in insulating Afghanistan's new democratic political institutions from the corrosive influence of the narcotics trafficking, our shared goals and our many significant achievements to date will be threatened.

At the same time, we recognize the narcotics problem cannot be treated successfully in a vacuum. Cultivation, processing and export of opium poppy is linked inextricably to good governance, prosperity and overall security.

Drug trafficking doesn't just threaten Afghanistan – it threatens the region and beyond. Only by working together will narcotics production and trafficking be defeated in Afghanistan.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.